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THE SITUATION OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI

MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS

SECTORAL POLICY QUESTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 12 August 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith, from the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the texts of the communiqué (see annex I) and the Montego Bay Declaration (see annex II) issued at the conclusion of the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, which was held at Montego Bay, Jamaica, from 29 June to 4 July 1997.

I have the further honour to request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as documents of the General Assembly under items 44, 97, 98, 99 and 100 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) M. Patricia DURRANT
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/52/150 and Corr.1.

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Annex I

EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, HELD AT MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA FROM 29 JUNE TO 4 JULY 1997

COMMUNIQUÉ

The Eighteenth Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community was held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 30 June- 4 July 1997.

Heads of Government in attendance were: Hon. Lester Bird, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Planning, Social Services and Information, Antigua and Barbuda; Rt. Hon Hubert Ingraham, Prime Minister, The Bahamas; Rt. Hon. Owen Arthur, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Barbados; the Rt. Hon. Manuel Esquivel, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Belize; Hon. Edison James, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, Legal Affairs and Labour, Dominica; Dr. the Hon. Keith C. Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Trade, Industry and National Security, Grenada; His Excellency Samuel A. Hinds, President, Cooperative Republic of Guyana; Rt. Hon. Percival J. Patterson, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Jamaica; Hon. Dr. Denzil Douglas, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Planning and National Security, St Kitts and Nevis; Dr. the Hon. Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Information and the Public Service, Saint Lucia; Rt. Hon. Sir James E. Mitchell, Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, St Vincent and the Grenadines; His Excellency Drs. Jules A. Wijdenbosch, President, Republic of Suriname, and Hon. Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The British Virgin Islands was represented by the Chief Minister, Hon. Ralph O'Neal. The Turks and Caicos Islands was represented by Hon. Derek Hugh Taylor, Chief Minister and Minister of Finance, Development and Commerce.

Hon. Adelina Tuitt, Minister of Education, represented Montserrat.

Hon. Hubert Hughes, Chief Minister of Anguilla also attended.

Also in attendance were His Excellency Dr. Leonel Fernandez, the President of the Dominican Republic, and His Excellency René Préval, President of the Republic of Haiti,.

Dr. the Hon. Nathan Shamuyarira, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Zimbabwe represented His Excellency Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe.

The following dignitaries were also in attendance as specially invited participants to the Conference; Hon. Ricardo Cabrisas, Minister of Trade of Cuba; His Excellency Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; His Excellency Dr. Joao Pinheiro, Commissioner for Development, European Union; and His Excellency Cesar Gaviria Trujillo, Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States (OAS).

Messages were received from the President of the Republic of Venezuela and from the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

OPENING CEREMONY

The Opening Ceremony was chaired by Mr. Edwin Carrington, Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

In his remarks, the Secretary-General observed that "the dynamics of change and the expectation as we move inexorably to a new millenium - in fact in a mere 914 days or so - have been virtually unprecedented in recent history." Further, "the transformation and fuller utilisation of our human resources will undoubtedly be the bedrock on which we construct a strong community in the new millenium using our small size more as an asset than a liability".

Statements were made by the Rt. Hon. Percival J. Patterson, Prime Minister of Jamaica and Chairman of the Conference of Heads of Government; Hon. Lester Bird, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda; H.E. Mr. Samuel A. Hinds, President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana; Rt. Hon. Hubert Ingraham, Prime Minister of The Bahamas, and Dr. the Hon. Kenny Anthony, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia.

In his statement, Prime Minister Patterson welcomed his colleague Heads of Government and their delegations to the Eighteenth CARICOM Summit in Montego Bay and extended a special welcome to President Hinds of Guyana, and Prime Minister Anthony of Saint Lucia, who were attending their first Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government in their new capacities.

Prime Minister Patterson recalled that fifty years ago another generation of West Indian leaders had met at Fairfield, Montego Bay, to chart a future for the Caribbean Region in the post-war era and to prepare, as free peoples, for the tasks of nation-building that would accompany Independence. Noting the changing dynamics in the New World Order, he urged the Caribbean Community to commence a new chapter in the pursuit of unity "to secure our survival, promote our progress and preserve our independence."

Prime Minster Lester Bird, in noting the passing of both President Cheddi Jagan of Guyana and former Prime Minister of Jamaica Michael Manley, noted they had left a legacy that all leaders should embrace of selfless commitment to the People, a willingness to stand up against the odds in pursuit of national development and fierce determination to defend the Region's rights and entitlements.

Prime Minister Bird said conditions in the world environment were not helpful to the Caribbean but it was not beyond us to change these conditions or to reach an appropriate accommodation with them.

President Samuel Hinds said "we would fail the original architects of CARICOM if we do not refine their vision in light of our experiences". He expressed the view that "growth and development was a slower process entailing more toil, endurance and soul searching than we imagined as we struggled for independence. This growth and development after independence required the integration of our people in a social contract, essentially different from that of colonial society."

The Rt. Hon. Hubert Ingraham said it remained critically important to mobilise our joint negotiating skills to maximise potential benefits to the Region from opportunities and challenges resulting from North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) and the post-Lome relationship with Europe.

He also said it was only appropriate, given the nature and dynamism of the forces and developments in international trade that CARICOM's response be defined by a sense of urgency and realism. He announced the payment in full of the assessed contribution of The Bahamas to the budget of the Regional Negotiating Machinery (RNM).

Dr. the Hon. Kenny Anthony said that "a new style of governance in CARICOM requires that we make decisions that are capable of implementation, that we argue and negotiate differences so that the final accord represents not a false, facile concession, but a genuine digestion of division that ultimately produces a decision that envelopes our hopes and dreams."

All the speakers drew reference to the plight of Montserrat and called for a Regional response.

THE SITUATION IN MONTSERRAT

Heads of Government received with profound sorrow the news of greatly increased levels of volcanic activity in Montserrat. They expressed their condolences to the Government and people of that fellow Member State on the tragic loss of life and the extensive physical damage occasioned by the continuing eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano. Aware that this violent and unrelenting natural disaster threatened the economic survival of Montserrat and the livelihood of its people, Heads of Government committed themselves to the provision within the limits of their resources, such humanitarian, economic, technical, diplomatic and other forms of assistance in support of economic and social life in Montserrat, including the mobilisation of external assistance from regional and international donor institutions and countries.

They instructed the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) to coordinate the assistance to be provided from Member States to Montserrat.

The Government of Montserrat expressed its deep appreciation for the support provided by CARICOM Member States in response to the situation in Montserrat.

Signing of the Protocols Amending the Treaty of Chaguaramas

During the Opening Ceremony, the Prime Ministers of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, the President of Guyana, the Prime Ministers of Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago signed Protocol II on the Rights of Establishment, Provision of Services and Movement of Capital.

The President of Suriname affixed his signature with an understanding that it would be effective as from a date to be notified by Suriname.

The Prime Minister of The Bahamas signed Protocol I Amending the Treaty of Chaguaramas which provides for the restructuring of the Organs and Institutions of the Community and for redefining their functional relationships so as to enhance the participation of their peoples of the Region and in particular the social partners, in the integration movement.

Education and Human Resource Development
Strategies for Building a Creative and Productive Workforce

Heads of Government committed themselves to the implementation of specific measures identified in the documents ***Towards Creative and Productive Citizens for the Twenty-First Century*** and ***Human Resource Development and Science and Technology within the Context of the Single Market and Economy*** endorsed during the Special Session of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Conference which addressed ***Education and Human Resource Development: Strategies for Building a Creative and Productive Workforce***.

They agreed on a number of measures for priority implementation, including the attainment of 15 per cent enrolment of the post-secondary group in tertiary-level education by the Year 2005 and universal quality secondary education by the same date.

Heads of Government recognised that knowledge had become the central factor of competitiveness. They emphasised the importance of life-long learning and continuing education as well as the need to develop and apply science and technology to the production of goods and services. They also agreed to enlist the active participation of the Private sector in policy development, planning, implementation and financing of HRD programmes.

Heads of Government re-emphasised that education and training must be relevant and should lead to the development of a creative and adaptive individual; and be geared to producing skilled labour for the key economic sectors of industry, agriculture and services, in particular tourism.

They agreed to the establishment of national machineries to monitor the implementation of national programmes and the setting up of a High-Level Technical Group at the Regional level to monitor the achievement of goals and to evaluate the impact of these programmes.

CANDIDATURES

Heads of Government endorsed Sir George Alleyne of Barbados as the CARICOM candidate for the position of Director-General of the World Health Organisation and agreed that all CARICOM States would use every opportunity to advance this candidature. They also endorsed the candidature of Jamaica for election to one of the two non-permanent seats on the UN Security Council allocated to the Latin America and Caribbean Group for the period 2000-2001. Elections for this position will be held at the Fifty-Fourth Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1999.

Heads of Government also endorsed the proposal by the Caribbean Group in UNESCO for the acceptance by the UNESCO membership of the allocation to the Caribbean of four permanent seats on the UNESCO Executive Board.

Heads of Government also endorsed the other candidatures recommended by the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs.

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Heads of Government recalled with appreciation the continued interest of the Government of the British Virgin Islands to become a full member of the Caribbean Community. They noted that following the visit of a team to the British Virgin Islands, a Draft Memorandum of Understanding setting out possible membership terms had been prepared. The Government of the British Virgin Islands is engaging in wide ranging internal consultations on the Draft Memorandum with a view to finalising the process as soon as possible. In the meantime, the British Virgin Islands will continue its participation in the Caribbean Community as an Associate Member.

HAITI

Heads of Government expressed their satisfaction at the acceptance by the President of Haiti, His Excellency, Mr. Réné Préval of their invitation to participate in their Eighteenth Meeting. With regard to Haiti's application for membership in the Community, Heads of Government, in accordance with Article 29, agreed to admit Haiti to membership of the Community. In accordance with Article 29(2), Heads of Government constituted a Working Group to settle the terms and conditions of Haiti's accession. In the interim, Haiti was invited to participate in the deliberations of the Organs and Bodies of the Community.

Heads of Government also took note with satisfaction of their ongoing cooperation efforts with Haiti including the formal presentation to President Préval at their Eighteenth Meeting of 30,000 manuals for use in Haiti's Literacy Campaign.

Heads of Government welcomed the decision of Canada, following consultation with Haiti, to further extend the Canadian presence in Haiti until December 1997.

BELIZE-GUATEMALA

Heads of Government noted the report by the Prime Minister of Belize on the continuing claim by Guatemala to Belizean territory which had been restated by Guatemala at discussions held in February 1997 in Miami, USA as well as the response of Belize to Guatemala that the statement of the territorial claim represented a retrograde step. They called upon the Government of Guatemala to review its position, taking into account the ongoing expressions of concern by the international community over the continuation of its claim to Belizean territory. They also encouraged the Governments of Belize and Guatemala to continue their dialogue so that an early solution to the problem could be arrived at in which Guatemala would relinquish its territorial claim and recognise the boundaries of Belize as established by the 1859 Boundary Treaty.

GUYANA-VENEZUELA

Heads of Government noted that the relations between Guyana and Venezuela were cordial and continued to progress through dialogue and mutual understanding although certain irritants continued to be present in these relations.

They expressed their satisfaction that the solution to the controversy continued to be dealt with under the aegis of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and in this regard, they welcomed the role of the good officer, Sir Alister McIntyre in this process.

They reaffirmed their full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guyana and reiterated their desire for a peaceful settlement of the Guyana-Venezuela controversy.

ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

Heads of Government noted the major developments within the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) since their Seventeenth Meeting, including the convening of the Second Ordinary Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council at which Grenada assumed the Presidency, as well as Meetings of the ACS Special Committees. Heads of Government emphasised the need for CARICOM Member States to continue to participate in the consolidation of the ACS to ensure the attainment of its objectives.

CARICOM-CENTRAL AMERICA

Heads of Government noted the mechanisms that had been put in place at the Third Meeting of the CARICOM-Central America Ministerial Conference, held in Costa Rica in November 1996 for closer cooperation and integration between the two regions. They welcomed the agreement of Central America to move towards free trade with CARICOM and looked forward to continuing the process of dialogue and convergence at the next CARICOM-Central America Ministerial Conference to be held in Guyana in the third quarter of 1997.

CARICOM-CANADA RELATIONS

Heads of Government expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the Eighth Meeting of the Canada-CARICOM Joint Trade and Economic Committee (JTEC) and reiterated their confidence that the special relationship between CARICOM and Canada will continue to their mutual benefit. They welcomed the ongoing consultative process on which Suriname had embarked with Canada towards the incorporation of Suriname in the Existing CARICOM-Canada Agreements. They also welcomed the proposal by Canada for the Fifth CARICOM-Canada Summit to be held in the Spring of 1998.

CARICOM-JAPAN RELATIONS

Heads of Government welcomed the intensified relationship that was being developed between CARICOM and Japan and looked forward to the convening of the Fifth CARICOM-Japan Encounter during the last quarter of 1997. They expressed appreciation to the Government of Barbados for having agreed to host that Encounter.

CARICOM-USA RELATIONS

Heads of Government reiterated their satisfaction with the Caribbean-USA Summit held in Barbados, on 10 May 1997 and with the Bridgetown Partnership for Prosperity and Security which was adopted. They welcomed the arrangements for annual consultations between the Foreign Ministers of the Caribbean and the US Secretary of State and recognised the need for urgent and intense follow-up to the decisions adopted at the Caribbean-USA Summit. They also welcomed the early attention being given by the US Authorities to this process and reiterated their commitment to promote measures towards the advancement of trade enhancement and other areas of critical importance to the Region. They expressed their concern however that on certain critical understandings reached, the follow-through has not met expectations.

SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

Heads of Government took note of the accelerating pace of preparation for the next Summit of the Americas to be held in Santiago, Chile, 18-19 April 1998. They recognised the imperative of immediate commencement of preparation by the Region for effective participation in the Summit. They expressed the view that the proposed Agenda adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Hemisphere on 1 June 1997, reflected the broad interests of all participating states and reiterated their commitment to the hemispheric process launched at the Miami Summit in December 1994. With respect to the process for the

creation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas, Heads of Government were apprised of the recommendation of the Trade Ministers of the Hemisphere that negotiations be launched at the Second Summit. In that context, they took note of the schedule of preparatory activities for the Fourth Meeting of Hemispheric Trade Ministers in Costa Rica in February 1998. They charged the newly established Regional Negotiating Machinery to ensure the effective preparation and participation of the Region in both the Fourth Trade Ministerial Meeting and the Second Summit of the Americas. Heads of Government welcomed the efforts of the Governments of Chile and Costa Rica to maintain an open preparatory process and to involve all States in the hemisphere. They pledged their cooperation with the two host governments.

Heads of Government welcomed adoption of the Report of the Working Group on Smaller Economies and reiterated their determination to ensure that the interests of these economies are fully taken into account in the preparation for and the content of the FTAA. Heads of Government recognised the continuing importance of the Working Group on Smaller Economies in the refinement and promotion of their interests within the FTAA.

CARIBBEAN-EU RELATIONS

Heads of Government exchanged views with Professor Joao de Deus Pinheiro, Commissioner for Development, European Union. Participating in the discussions were the Presidents of the Dominican Republic and Haiti and the Minister of Industry and Commerce of Zimbabwe, who attended as the special representative of President Mugabe, of Zimbabwe which currently holds the Presidency of the ACP Council. The Cuban Minister of Trade attended as an Observer in solidarity with the CARIFORUM Group.

Heads of Government outlined the general philosophy and specific views of the Caribbean on the approach to, and various elements of, a successor Convention to Lomé IV. Commissioner Pinheiro welcomed the ACP intention to negotiate the successor Convention as a unified group. Professor Pinheiro outlined his vision for the Convention and the process underway in the EU to develop a definitive position. He laid emphasis on the changed international environment in which the successor Convention will be negotiated and underscored his belief that the concept of ownership would be an essential component in any successor arrangement. The Commissioner was positive and largely in unison with the views expressed by CARIFORUM Heads of Government.

The Zimbabwean Minister stressed the importance of ACP solidarity and of sustained efforts to maintaining cohesion in the face of efforts to undermine the Group. He recalled that it was on the basis of solidarity that the Lomé Convention had been achieved and expressed the confidence that should this be maintained, the successor arrangement to Lomé IV will be as satisfactory as the earlier Conventions. The Minister pointed to CARICOM's impressive history of integration and that information acquired and lessons learned during his visit would be transmitted to the African Region to President Mugabe whose country currently occupies the Presidency of the OAU as well as the ACP.

REGIONAL NEGOTIATING MACHINERY

Heads of Government received the first progress report on the activities of the Regional Negotiating Machinery established to coordinate the Region's external negotiations. The priority areas of focus are the FTAA, Post Lomé IV ACP-EU Relations; the non-economic initiatives of the Miami Summit, including the Second Summit, and the World Trade Organisation negotiations. The Regional Negotiating Machinery effectively established in April 1997 has as its Chief Negotiator, Sir Shridath Ramphal. Heads of Government welcomed the efforts towards the consolidation, staffing and other logistical aspects of the Regional Negotiating Machinery. Noting the financial requirements for the first year of

operations of the Regional Negotiating Machinery. Heads of Government agreed to fulfil their obligations and acknowledged with appreciation the support to be provided by the Caribbean Development Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat as well as that pledged by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Heads of Government also welcomed the offer by the Government of Barbados to provide accommodation and facilities for the small Technical Unit which would support the work of the Regional Negotiating Machinery.

Heads of Government also endorsed a paper entitled ***Approaches to the Development of a Strategy and Positions for the Caribbean,*** as a basis for consultation throughout the CARIFORUM region towards the development of a Regional Negotiating strategy.

They agreed to a process of consultation to define the Regional Negotiating Strategy beginning with a Joint Meeting of the four Negotiating Working Groups in late July 1997. They also agreed that the Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations should adopt the Regional Negotiating Strategy before the end of October 1997.

Heads of Government noted the establishment of Advisory Committees on External Negotiations in a number of Member States and urged similar action throughout the Region. They nevertheless recognised the constraints faced by some countries especially those in the OECS in preparing for the series of external negotiations and acknowledged the request for assistance to those countries and to the OECS Secretariat.

CARICOM SINGLE MARKET AND ECONOMY

Heads of Government acknowledged that a number of significant steps towards the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy by the Year 1999 have been taken. The signing of Protocol I amending the Treaty of Chaguaramas to restructure the

Organs and Institutions of the Community has now been completed and Member States have declared their intention to provisionally apply Protocol I pending its ratification and entry into force.

New ground in the integration arrangement has been broken with the signing by eleven Member States of Protocol II to provide for the Right of Establishment, Provision of Services and Movement of Capital which constitute the central elements of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy. On ratification of the Protocol, the ground will be laid for the free movement of factors of production giving CARICOM nationals the right to establish businesses for the production of goods and services throughout participating countries.

Heads of Government mandated the Secretariat and the Inter Governmental Task Force to finalise the Protocols on Disadvantaged Countries, Regions and Sectors, Agricultural, Industrial and Trade Policy by the Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting, and the remaining Protocols on Dispute Settlement, Competition Policy and Transportation by the Nineteenth Meeting of Conference.

Since the last Meeting of the Conference, the CARICOM Agreement on Social Security which provides for the transfer of Social Security benefits has entered into force among six Member States adding to the regional Agreements intended to facilitate the operations of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

Heads of Government with lead responsibilities for the various elements of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy have been enjoined to use their good offices to ensure and facilitate the implementation of the requisite measures in a timeframe reflective of the 1999 target date.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROTECTION PROGRAMME

Heads of Government viewed with concern the problems arising with the administration of justice whereby witnesses and other individuals within the system have been eliminated or intimidated. In this regard, they accepted the recommendations of the Panel of Experts on the Criminal Justice Protection Programme which have been referred to the appropriate authorities for implementation.

TOURISM

Heads of Government considered a number of proposals on air transportation, tourism, human resource development and capital investment which had been identified by CARICOM Ministers of Tourism as critical issues in sustainable tourism development.

With respect to air transportation, Heads of Government agreed that a meeting of air transport and tourism personnel be convened in January 1998 to determine a strategy for the sustainability and development of both the tourism and airline industries in the Region, with its recommendation to be submitted to the Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting of Conference.

Heads of Government also agreed that Ministers of Tourism should conduct an in-depth examination of Human Resource Development (HRD) issues at their proposed meeting in January 1998. The Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) proposal for the formation of a Tourism Education and Training Council, at the broader CARIFORUM level, which would oversee the strategic changes needed in Tourism HRD was unanimously accepted by the Conference. It was further agreed that Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions (ACTI) should be a member of the proposed Council.

Investment in Tourism

Heads of Government expect to receive at their next Inter-Sessional Meeting, a comprehensive paper on issues related to investment in tourism which will be presented after consideration by Tourism and Finance Ministers of the Region.

CARICOM Tourism Forum

Heads agreed to a proposal that Tourism Ministers of CARICOM should meet systematically to advance issues and develop policies for the tourism industry. Such meetings would take place as part of the Council on Trade and Economic Development (COTED).

Michael Manley Memorial Fund

The CTO Michael Manley Memorial Fund, of which Prime Minister, P.J. Patterson is the Patron, was officially launched at the Eighteenth Meeting of the Conference on 2 July 1997. It pays tribute to the Rt. Hon. Michael Manley for his contribution to regional tourism and will help to train young Caribbean people to take up roles in Caribbean tourism development.

BANANAS

Heads of Government welcomed the European Union's appeal against the WTO panel decision, and the support being given by the European Union generally towards the maintenance of the EU Banana Regime. Heads of Government undertook to participate fully in the appeal process through the ACP.

They noted with regret that steps taken by President Clinton to resolve the European banana issue while addressing Caribbean concerns have not yet achieved the desired results.

RICE

The Heads of Government agreed to despatch a Ministerial Mission to Brussels for urgent discussions with senior European Union officials on the problems being faced by Caribbean rice exporters on the European market. The issues to be discussed are the continued application of safeguard measures against the exportation of ACP rice to the European Union through the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) and the delay in the implementation of the reduction of the levy payable on ACP rice exported directly to the European Union.

LISBON WORLD EXPOSITION: EXPO '98

Heads of Government considered the participation on a joint basis of CARICOM Member States in Expo '98 which is to be held in Lisbon from 22 May-30 September 1998 under the theme **The Oceans.** Heads of Government urged that at both national and regional levels, action be taken to facilitate effective regional participation in the Expo.

IWOKRAMA RAINFOREST PROJECT

Heads of Government were pleased to learn that the Commonwealth Secretariat was iin the process of organising a donor conference to be held later in the year in Brussels, Belgium to mobilise funding for the Iwokrama Rainforest Project in Guyana.

They reiterated their support for the project and encouraged the participation of Member States along with the international community in support of this initiative.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Heads of Government in recognition of the milestone which will be reached by the Community in 1998, agreed that the Region would appropriately celebrate the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Chaguaramas with year-long activities. CARICOM Day 1998 will be marked by the Member States of the Region.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NINTH INTER-SESSIONAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE

Heads of Government agreed to convene their Ninth Inter-Sessional Meeting in Grenada during the first quarter of 1998.

APPRECIATION

Heads of Government expressed their deep appreciation to the Government and People of Jamaica for the excellent arrangements made for their Meeting and for the opportunity presented to the Region to observe the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Montego Bay Conference on **the Closer Association of the British West Indian Colonies**. Appreciation was also expressed for the many courtesies extended to their delegations.

Annex II

EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, HELD AT MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA FROM 29 JUNE TO 4 JULY 1997

MONTEGO BAY DECLARATION

Positioning the Caribbean for the Twenty-First Century

We, the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, assembled for the Eighteenth Meeting of our Conference, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, on 4 July 1997;

Recalling the historic gathering of fifty years ago in this city, when an earlier generation of West Indian leaders sought to prepare their countries for the new world, then emerging after the Second World War, with its prospect of decolonization and freedom for all peoples;

Affirming that the vision of unity, which engendered the federal experience, CARIFTA and CARICOM, continues to underlie and inspire our objective for a deeper integration process;

Aware that fundamental changes in the global community since the 1947 Montego Bay Conference have made the need for unity more compelling than ever before and that, to continue to secure our survival as a free people, we must act together to take advantage of opportunities and to overcome challenges;

Recognising that the momentum of globalisation demands even greater coordination and collaboration among small states, in the defence of our interests and the preservation of our independence;

Recognising also that our regional society currently faces grave threats including drug trafficking and its related activities and the increased frequency and greater intensity of natural disasters;

Concerned at the absence of appropriate measures by the multilateral financial institutions to relieve the burden of debt, the servicing of which retards the social and economic development of some of our member states;

Acknowledging the important role of culture in the thrust towards national and regional development in uniting our countries and in strengthening our identity as people of the Caribbean Community;

Convinced that the empowerment of all the peoples of our countries is of paramount importance to the advancement of our societies and in fulfilment of our regional objectives;

Conscious that such empowerment requires that priority attention be given to Human Resource Development and human capital formation throughout our Region;

Noting that over the last 50 years the process of integration in our region has deepened and that institutions, such as the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, have been created allowing for greater dialogue and increased co-operation between our states at many levels;

Make this basic and unswerving commitment to the peoples of our respective countries and to our Region as a whole;

PRINCIPLES

1. We rededicate ourselves to the principles upon which the Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community in July 1973 was based, of consolidating and strengthening the bonds which have historically existed among our peoples; of sharing a common determination to fulfill the hopes and aspirations of our peoples for full employment and improved standards of work and living. We reiterate that these objectives can most rapidly be attained by the optimum utilisation of available human and natural resources of the Region.

2. We resolve to strengthen and deepen our regional integration movement by committing ourselves to taking decisions that we can honour and implement, and to establishing structures of national and regional consultation that will widen the decision-making process to involve the broadest cross-sections of our societies.

3. We reiterate our commitment to the democratic principles which are embedded in our societies; we declare our unswerving respect for the rights and responsibilities of our citizens, and we re-affirm the principles enshrined in the Charter of Civil Society signed in February 1997 in which we committed ourselves to create a truly particpatory political environment within the Caribbean Community.

4. We reaffirm the integrity of our judicial system and pledge to maintain its independence by duly respecting and applying the constitutional principles governing it.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

5. We shall work unceasingly to strengthen the capabilities of all our people through redesigned, modern and relevant programmes of education and training at all levels and for all age groups. The physically challenged and other disadvantaged groups will have a special place in these programmes.

6. We shall focus on programmes which will equip our people to acquire the competencies to function effectively in the emerging knowledge-based economy. This will include programmes which will emphasise the creation, application and dissemination of knowledge.

7. Our Governments are determined to ensure that the importance of science and technology and the advances in telecommunications become all-pervasive factors which must be effectively and appropriately utilised for the benefit of our peoples.

8. Our Governments will emphasise, through the education systems which should be geared to the achievement of excellence, the importance of:

- creating the Caribbean person who will have among other attributes, the capacity to improve and maintain physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being;

- nurturing the fullest development of each person's potential without regard to gender;

- developing a culture of entrepreneurship ;

- the management and protection of the environment;

- research and development as a way of life and means of improving production;

- improving the competitiveness of those industries on which our economies are based.

9. We wish to mobilise for the betterment of our societies, the creative talents of all our people, wherever they may live in the world, and whatever their fields of endeavour, and provide for them an environment conducive to their participation in the Region's progress.

10. Consistent with the Grand Anse Declaration of 1989, we continue to recognise the enduring value of the University of the West Indies (UWI) as a regional institution in the service of our development. We also recognise the contributions of tertiary institutions of our Member States.

11. We commit ourselves to the implementation of the specific measures identified in the document **Towards Creative and Productive Citizens for the Twenty-first Century** approved by the Special Session of the Conference on ***Education and Human Resource Development: Strategies for Building a Creative and Productive Workforce*** during the Eighteenth Meeting of our Conference.

REGIONAL UNITY AND GLOBAL POSITIONING

12. We are committed to relieving the scourge of unemployment, and to reducing and eventually eliminating poverty throughout our Region. In this connection, the regional integration process must be seen as a collective instrument for the expanding and exploiting of opportunities for the fuller and more productive lives of our peoples.

13. We acknowledge the value of dialogue with our social partners and the contribution which they make to enhancing the development process in our individual countries and the Region as a whole.

14 In order to make regional unity a more effective tool for development and for building beneficial relations with other countries and groupings of countries, we agree that our states which are members of the Caribbean Common Market shall move speedily to complete the processes for creating a Single Market and Economy, of which the free movement of the factors of production and the harmonisation of monetary policies would be the most important components. We are committed to taking the necessary steps to establish the main elements of the Single Market and Economy by 1999.

15. In most of the areas associated with the Single Market and Economy, significant progress has been demonstrated by the conclusion of Protocol II, amending the Treaty of Chaguaramas to include provisions for the rights of establishment, provision of services and movement of capital and by earlier agreements for the free movement of skills.

16 We are also resolved to widen our integration process to include other CARIFORUM countries, while we strengthen our linkages with partner countries in the Association of Caribbean States.

17. At the same time, we shall continue to pursue mutually beneficial trade, tourism and other development cooperation with countries of Latin America.

18. We continue to attach importance to our long-established relations with Canada and the USA and underscore our commitment to the Caribbean/USA Partnership for Prosperity and Security as well as the modality of the CARICOM/Canada Joint Trade and Economic Committee.

19. We are committed to expanding our trade and economic relations with our traditional partners in Europe through negotiations for post-Lome IV arrangements between the European Union and the ACP Group of countries in just, enlightened and effective ways, and we are committed to doing so through strengthened solidarity with the other ACP countries.

20. We are, as well, eager to strengthen trade, economic investment and various other forms of co-operation with countries in Asia and Africa.

21. In the global economy that is evolving, we resolve to unite our best efforts to plan strategically to position our countries to take the fullest advantage of market niches, other global opportunities and sources of capital.

22. Accordingly, our Governments are fully committed to an open system of multilateral trade. In this connection, we shall make determined efforts to improve the international competitiveness of our economies strengthening our traditional sectors of agriculture and mining where they exist while placing emphasis on the services sector, building on the competitive positions we have already established in service industries such as tourism, entertainment, off-shore finance, and information processing.

23. In relation to the foregoing, we will work assiduously to secure recognition of our economies as small, fragile and vulnerable, and will work with others in similar situations to ensure, in our economic relations, treatment as special cases requiring exceptions, transitional periods, waivers and other arrangements that are fair and reasonable.

CARIBBEAN CULTURAL IDENTITY

24. We pledge collectively and individually, to foster the further development of the cultural identity of our Caribbean sense of community, cultural identity and certitude and richer forms of self-knowledge.

25. We recognise that sports have contributed to the gaining of international respect for our countries and to promoting a sense of dignity and self-worth in our peoples. We shall continue to encourage the achievement of excellence in sports not only to enlarge the opportunities for individual success, but also to further enrich our Region's standing in the global community and to enhance the dignity and pride of our peoples.

26. We further recognise that our sense of identity as a CARICOM family has also been and will continue to be greatly enhanced by the enduring linkages created through our University of the West Indies and pledge our unwavering support for its continued development to meet the diverse challenges of the new millenium.

DECLARATION

We, the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, declare our confidence in the creative capacity of the peoples of our Region, in their ability to adapt to changing circumstances, in their resourcefulness and in their fortitude.

We are convinced that as our peoples have uplifted themselves in the 20th Century from conditions of abject poverty to improving social and economic conditions, as they have risen from subjection to establish democratic governance in free societies, as they have responded to the challenges of the last fifty years, they will summon from within themselves the strength and creativity to succeed over the next fifty years and more.

Strengthened by this conviction, we face the 21st Century with the full expectation that, despite the odds, the Caribbean Community will thrive and prosper.